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Conference focuses of Hawaii telescope facility

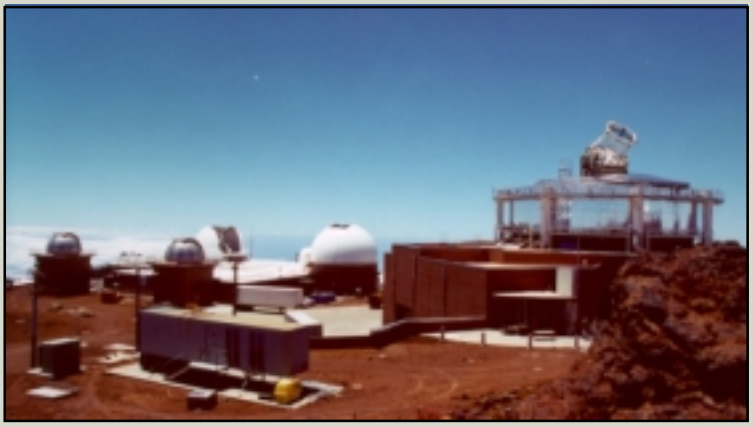
by Rich Garcia, Directed Energy Directorate

MAUI, HAWAII. — More than 200 high-tech representatives from industry, academia and government attended a five day conference here from August 30 to September 3.

Participating space-surveillance leaders from around the world shared information on research activities that take place at the United States Air Force's telescope facilities atop Haleakala, a nearby 10,000-foot-high mountain.

The event focused on imaging and image processing, photometry and radiometry, laser-radar technologies, orbital debris, near-earth objects, astronomy and high-performance computing.

Attendees were allowed to tour the largest and most advanced telescope in the Department of Defense: 3.67-meter telescope known as the Advanced Electro-Optical System, managed by the Air Force Research Laboratory's Directed Energy Directorate at Kirtland AFB, N.M. Also available to tour was the directorate's Maui High-Performance Computing Center, operated for the Air Force by the University of New Mexico. This computing capability is among the DOD's top six computer centers.



INTRODUCING THE MAUI LAB — Attendees at a technical conference held in Maui were allowed to tour the most advanced telescope in the Department of Defense and the Maui High-Performance Computing Center. Both facilities are operated by the Directed Energy Directorate.

The 3.67-meter telescope, which is scheduled to become fully operational next year, continues to receive enhancements. The telescope recently achieved "first light" on a recently installed adaptive optics system and in mid-month a science-grade visible imaging sensor was installed.

Earlier this summer, a long-wave infrared imager on the 3.67-meter telescope achieved "first light," capturing thermal images of Mars and the Hubble space telescope. This sensor also gathered lunar images, mapping temperature changes on the moon's surface as the moon went from being sunlit through the earth's shadow to full illumination again. Last month, this sensor was used to support the Lunar Prospector Impact mission.

AFRL Commander Maj. Gen. Richard R. Paul opened the conference. Among the key speakers was U.S. Senator Daniel K. Inouye. **@**